

## Abstract of the Invention

**[0051]** Systems, architectures, and data structures are described which are used to manage distributed design chains, specifically for domains in which data reside in multiple applications and are linked through complex interrelationships. The design chains or design networks integrated by the invention may include multiple companies in multiple sites collaborating to design and develop a new product. The invention is intended to integrate seamlessly and transparently with existing, diverse legacy applications, which include inter-linked data relevant to the design, thereby addressing the needs identified above.